

Note to Self

13th July 2012

Dear Owners and Investors,

Some days I wonder why I do what I do, I really could make more money by sitting in a big truck on the mines I am sure. Do they have high heeled steel capped boots I wonder? I have said it before, and I will say it again Ramon and I will never become rich from having Property Ladder Realty, it is the property that we have in our portfolio that will allow us to life comfortably when we retire.

Some of you even wonder why on earth I bother to sit here and write a novel to entertain you - I do it in the hope just one of you will take notice and do something to make their retirement years better. I talk about Cairns property because that is what we know and understand. You could invest where you live, you could do it in shares - it doesn't matter so long as you do something. Life is ticking away quickly and before you know it the years have flown by. If you need some motivation, then here it is.

On Tuesday I went to pick up Miss P from the hospital at 1pm. The nurses told me she was packed and ready to go first thing in the morning. For a lady that had been taken to the hospital in just her nightie, boy did she have a lot of stuff to take home - all of which I had to carry down to the car like a pack horse! All weekend Tasha had been going through the mountain of stuff that was at Miss P's old unit. I told her to be ruthless and only take what she would need and was of any value. On Monday I had the boys take over her things and the furniture. Tasha then went to the new unit on Monday and unpacked it all for her. I have to tell you when I walked in, it was like she had been living there for years. Everything was in its place and there were even flowers on the side table waiting for her.

We went through to the bedroom and the bed was made and just to make her feel at home there were two clocks on one bedside and on the other a digital clock and yet another clock next to that. There was also a battery operated night light on each bedsit - Tasha had made the decision to leave the other back at the other unit, along with the 6 clocks.

In the wardrobe all hanging in order were her clothes, towels folded, everything she could need was there and easy to find. The bathroom even had her tooth paste on the vanity ready for her to use.

There are some days that I think just how fortunately I am to have people that work with me to make things happen, and I know they will do the absolute right thing. OK so there was a bit of whinging from the boys about how far the unit was from the car park and how it was raining all day!

After showing her around the complex with the on site manager, Miss P and I got down to business. We had the electricity to change over, the phone to have moved and the post office redirection just to name a few things. I made a list of a few more things that she was missing and promised to come back that night. I asked if she needed anything else before I went, and she looked at me and said "Am I staying here now?" Poor love is still a bit confused. When I did make it back, she had been to dinner and was getting ready to call it a night. She wasn't too happy about the dinner they served her.

Now I have told this story for one reason - to motivate you. Miss P isn't a rich woman, she has a meagre amount of savings in the bank. She now has no choice but to live in a retirement village.

She gets her own little one bedroom unit - and let me tell you it is LITTLE. She can go to get the cereal from the restaurant and bring it back to her unit to eat, and they will even give you a few days rations in one go. If you don't like cereal you can take a few slices of bread and toast it in your room. She has to go to lunch at 12 and then dinner at 5pm. You don't get a choice on what food they serve, and I am not sure how good it is - but who are you going to complain to?

For this, the management company takes all of her rental assistance, plus 85% of her pension. This leaves her 15% - a whole \$104.30 per fortnight or \$52.15 per week. Sounds doable? Now out of this \$52.15 you have to pay for the electricity to the unit, the phone, if you have a car you have to pay for the registration, insurance and fuel, if you want to get your hair cut, if you want to buy any extra luxury food items they don't provide (sorry I am not giving up my chocolate for any one), if you want to go to the movies or do lunch. I don't know about you, but I would be struggling to live on the comfortable allowance of \$55,000 per annum so how on earth they would expect me to live on \$52.15 per week is unimaginable. For those that missed it, you really should visit this link

<http://www.superannuation.asn.au/resources/retirement-standard>

We have made a decision, if we have to live in a retirement village - can it be on a cruise ship? You can eat what you like when you like, they have entertainment and they can wheel us around!

Now I know I have spoken about two things before - how I am my own worst enemy and how I am unemployable. This afternoon I had a moment where I really thought I could be a check out chick. I have an understanding that I would have to only work the afternoon shifts as mornings are just not my cup of tea. I would be able to clock in, do my work, clock out and go home. I would even get a LUNCH BREAK.

On this thing I haven't had in 12 years, I would go and get my hair done before it is really embarrassing, I would get my legs waxed before they start to get to the plating stage, I would meet people for coffee and I would get my nails done. I have to tell you I have been trying to get to the nail place for over two weeks, and each time I even think about it - stuff happens, and I have to deal with it.

Tuesday I thought I would get Miss P settled in, go and have some me time and the world would be happy. No chance. Why is it that I give up 4 hours of my precious time for some one that is pretty much a complete stranger, but don't make the same amount of time for me? Hope that big man in the sky is watching this. I did manage to sneak away this afternoon - only because it is late night trading. I even had my toes done - the cost for this was \$60 so luckily for me I am not Miss P or I would have to start giving up a lot of things. As for employable - can you imagine me taking orders? Sorry as I fall off my chair laughing.

The units we look after are all in the same blocks, and many within sight of each other. We now have such a net work of tenants and trades people that over the past two days I have been told about a water leak at City Park by not one but three different people! It helps to make my job so much easier.

The rental market is picking up, but sometimes you just have to shake your head as it doesn't always make sense. We had a two bedroom town house come up in Tropic Gardens. This is how scary I must be, we have had this lady there for a while.

I would guess that she drinks a bit and her daughter is living with her. The boyfriend is a problem and he has caused me some small issues in the past. A few weekends ago it must have kicked off and I got a complaint from one of the neighbours. I got this on Monday morning, so I called the tenant. I didn't even have to start speaking, she just said she was expecting the phone call and had decided it would be best to move on. I agreed it would be best and took her two weeks' notice. We put it onto the internet, but as she has been there some time we don't have a good range of internal photos. When she moved in we were only advertising in the newspaper, so we didn't really need them. Essentially we just put up photos of the outside of the complex. I had it on the site at \$220 per week unfurnished.

I have four people that are all busting to apply and worse than that they are all really good potential tenants. The one that has chased me the most is the newly transferred Police Man. I got the call from the tenant to say she was finished cleaning, and it was ready to inspect. I went over and as soon as I saw it was good I called the Police Man to come and have a look. He filled out the form there and then, came back to the office and paid the money and is moving in as of Monday. The original tenant was paying \$190 and he is now paying \$220 per week. It will be good to have a lawman in the complex to keep everyone in check! All I now have to do is work out how on earth I am going to tell the other three they didn't get it! Better still this is yet another unit that is now renting higher than I have rented them prior to the GFC.

We have Miss P's unit and this one didn't even make it onto the internet. The unit is all clean and ready to go, he moves in on Friday.

On the other hand we are struggling a bit with two of the other units - now my definition of struggling and other agents does vary. These have been vacant for three days, and I am stressing about it.

Yesterday I had to call another agent about a property. I know she manages one unit in the complex but I asked if she managed any others in the same block - she had absolutely no idea. Us on the other hand even our carpet cleaner knows which units we manage in the block as he has been there to do them all over the past couple of years. Troy our Gardener knows, Bart knows, Clinton knows - and they aren't our property managers. They may not know their real names, but they know that Peaceful Lover lives at Unit 30 - don't ask, as you don't really want to know why we call him that.

I will finish off with another tenant story. If you remember Miss M the cleaner, she left the property and the 74 year old grandmother with her granddaughter moved in. They say that sometimes people come into your life for a reason, and for this couple the stars lined up when they met us.

Many of you won't know this, but Ramon did have viral fatigue for many years not that long ago. He would be the first one to say it was a bunch of rubbish and it was just people that were lazy and didn't want to go to work - bunch of bludgers that just want to watch tv on the couch all day. Within a period of six months, he got to a stage where he would sleep for at least 11 hours, drag himself out of bed onto the sofa and then sleep for a few more hours. This went through patches and some weeks were worse than others.

One day in the local Saturday paper was an article on the Lightning Process so with nothing to lose but a few dollars off he went. I have to tell you that you can call it voodoo, you can call it anything you like but it worked for him. We still have some days where it is a sofa day, but these are rare.

When I was showing the 74 Iranian Grandmother around she was telling me about the granddaughter and her chronic fatigue. I mentioned the course Ramon went on, and when we went back to do the gas for them a few weeks after they moved in Ramon had a talk to her. I have to tell you this morning I got phone call from the Grandmother to say they had flown down to Brisbane to do the course. Miss L is now a new person and is out all the time and says she has 20 years of living to catch up. The first night of the course she was up most of the night dancing and celebrating. She just wanted to thank us for giving her granddaughter back - we haven't done anything but be in the right place in her life. It does make you feel good when you can do something for someone else.

I hope you are all happy and well in your world.

Linda